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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 003014

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/04/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [FI](#) [PBIO](#) [FR](#) [CROS](#) [GERARD](#)

SUBJECT: NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO FINLAND GERARD CROS

Classified By: CDA Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) According to the official GoF "Daily Bulletin" on May 2, Gerard Cros will be the next French Ambassador in Helsinki. Although Cros has been involved in work on the Congo Basin Forest partnership, he appears to have been essentially without a job since being replaced as MFA Africa Director at the end of 2002. His official title has been Diplomatic Counselor.

2. (C) When Cros left the Africa Department, then-FM Villepin said it was because Cros had asked for a change, and that his performance since assuming his duties in July 2001 had been excellent. Our contacts in the Africa Department confirmed that because Cros' wife was extremely ill, suffering from cancer, Cros had asked for less demanding duties. However, it had also become apparent during Villepin's frequent travels to Africa that Cros did not have the Foreign Minister's confidence.

3. (C) We found Cros to be relatively open during his tenure as Africa Director and he maintained excellent relations with then-AF A/S Kansteiner. Cros has served overseas at the UN, Pretoria, Beijing, and as Ambassador to Mozambique, Chile, and Indonesia. His English is approximately 3/3 plus.  
ROSENBLATT